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FCC - MAILROOM

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Dear Federal Communications Commission: DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

I am writing to you to express my dissatisfaction with the increasing costs of living. I, specifically, in this letter want to address the fees regarding our phone bills. I am not only against this new proposal of a "monthly flat fee" system, but for any and all fees, that I and my family haven't incurred/actually used or benefit from. This new idea and the other fees are just another form of taxation (extortion), and again, one without representation.

First of all, I, with one income supporting a family of 4 and our daily cost of living, am already opposed to being charged this universal service fee. I especially oppose it in addition to the high rates I already pay for my phone. **I have all these extra charges that significantly raise the cost of my phone bill over the actual usage of my phone!** I can hardly afford my phone bill as it is. I think that it is unfair that I have to pay, in addition to the charges for my regular normal use of my phone, for state and federal taxes on both basic and non-basic monthly services, AND for the Federal Subscriber Line Charge and Federal Universal Service Fee. As it is, we already pay a separate fee for the 911 system and a costly fee for many other things over the cost of our actual phone usage alone! We not only pay for changes that are made to our phone service but are charged for our privacy, as well. (We are being punished (charged) for wanting to keep our phone number private (unpublished) to keep solicitors and harassing individuals from bothering us.) All these fees aren't just a small overall fee for having the use of a phone coming into the one family residence. **THIS IS PER PHONE LINE! We are being taxed and regulated to death and this is just with our phone!**

That being said, I don't want to pay for someone else's phone use through the universal service fee. Let's put it this way, if I couldn't afford a car, no one would pay for me to have one! Therefore, I wouldn't be able to own one and would have to take mass transportation. Same principle applies here. If someone can't afford something then I shouldn't have to pay for it, their use or lifestyle. I pay my own bills and for what I can afford. No one is paying for anything my family or me wants or needs. There are many people whom I thought couldn't afford cell phones but they have them! My family and I can't afford a monthly cell phone bill and we could really use a cell phone when we are on the road traveling or in remote areas camping. But we can't afford one so we do without! We adjust our lifestyles around not having one! Therefore, as far as anything goes if a person can't afford a phone then they must make adjustments and find their own way around it. Share with a neighbor or get some bleeding heart liberal, someone with money or a family member help them pay for it. Don't suck us dry! They, the phone companies, or other advocates should find other ways to pay for phones/usage for those who can't afford it, libraries, schools, etc. Stop treating my family and me as a bank account to tap into to afford their habit, wants, and needs. **My money is mine for me and my family and the things we want, need, and try to afford! AND THE BIGGEST CRIME IS THAT WE AREN'T EVEN GIVEN A CHOICE** about whether or not we choose to help pay for others' needs! We are forced to just hand over OUR hard-earned money for something we don't actually use, esp. for some features we don't use all the time. It is distressing to know we have to pay for someone else to benefit and whom many we know don't deserve, appreciate, or work for it and/or who take advantage of it sometimes without having a true hardship! Having to pay by demand and not by choice doesn't fulfill the idea of democracy but does bring to mind words like extortion and theft.

Since my family and I are 'footing the bill' for whatever affects our lives, as well as others, we should be able to tell any and all officials in charge of a decision making process that affects us, when, where, and how our money is to be spent. We don't mind helping others but we shouldn't be made to just shell out money simply because we are told to! **WE have the right to dictate how the money is to be allotted.**

Also, another major concern is that we are not guaranteed that this money doesn't get diverted to 'other' wrongful uses or depleted by mismanagement. (Besides, the more money that is collected hasn't provided better service or affordable features.) It just provides more ways to get abused and makes those involved richer. This sometimes leads to having to pay more money to cover for so called 'cost of living' expenses, fraud, and other such excuses.

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(Like in many other charities and companies, these extra "mandatory" taxes, surcharges, and fees lead to many types of abuses of the system. The money doesn't always rightfully go to those most deserving or to where it should.)

Now, as to the 'across the board fee' that is being proposed, I, therefore, as someone concerned about increased taxes and telephone fees, oppose the big phone companies' plan to change the way monies are collected for the Universal Service Fund. The plan being pushed by the big phone companies and some in Congress would change the Universal Service Fund (USF) collection methodology from a "pay-for-what-you-use" system to a "monthly flat-fee." This flat-fee system would result in forced phone bill hikes for me -- and for millions of low-volume, long-distance users in the U.S. Shifting the funding burden of the USF away from high-volume users -- like big businesses -- and placing the weight on low-volume users -- students, prepaid wireless users, senior citizens and low-income residential and rural consumers -- is unfair. **I URGE YOU AND the FCC to reject this flat-fee plan.** It is a de-facto tax increase of as much as \$707 million for 43 million of low-volume, long-distance users in the U.S.

My suggestions are to have people pay for services as they go, FOR WHAT THEY ACTUALLY USE, and keep the fees reasonable and affordable! Also, phone service for those who can't afford it, to link up libraries and schools, and for any such worthy cause, can come from fundraisers and donations. It can come from those who CHOOSE to give and how much they want to contribute. Have an adopt-a-family or library program. Those who choose to volunteer for these programs can raise the money for the needy while those who donate can get a tax write-off. This way each hard-working private individual *won't be forced to have to pay for all the extra charges on their phone bills while trying to make their own independent living in the world!*

Please pass along my concerns especially my opposition to a USF numbers or flat-fee plan. Thank you for your continued work. I look forward to hearing from you about your position and progress on this matter and getting an acknowledgement that you received my letter.

Sincerely,



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